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THE MYSTICAL TENDENCY IN MODERN THOUGHT*

A brief survey of the mystical element in modern thought, particularly if it be contrasted with leading thought of a generation ago, even when confined to the necessarily brief outlines of a magazine article, is of great interest and gives rise to fascinating speculations.

If we throw our minds back a quarter of a century and survey in a very general manner the special phases of the leading thought of the day, as evidenced by magazine and lecture, it is at once apparent that it was distinctly a time of *destructive* thought. The human mind was emerging from a long period of slavery to orthodoxy, to creed and dogma. It was battling against tradition and precedent, and the travail was heavy before the birth of the new genius which is levening advanced modern thinking. The subjects of greatest general interest were conflicts between religion and science, battles royal between dogmatism and religious freedom, between mental freedom and mental servitude. Who does not recollect the famous magazine controversies between clergymen and scientists? Who in America does not recall the keen interest aroused by Colonel Ingersoll and the vituperation and fanatical abuse that followed and advertised him everywhere? There were Fabian Societies, Free Thought Societies, Secular Societies and Societies of Agnostics. The favorite subjects for debating clubs were religious controversies. At a little earlier date the evolutionist and their

*The following notes were expected to serve as the basis of an article for one of the secular magazines, but it was found impossible to accomplish this purpose. They are printed in the FORUM in their unfinished state, as the subject is of special interest to Theosophists.

theories had to force their way to a place in the thought of the day; and to do so had to break and destroy and contradict. It was essentially a period of destructive thought.

The universe and all contained therein was still divided into two departments, the "known" and the "unknown," the latter meaning all that pertained to religion. There was at that time no great in between, no "borderland" comprising a great mass of ill-digested and little understood facts, which we could appropriately label the "half-known." Contrast this with the condition we find to-day. Instead of agnostics we have theosophists, instead of materialists we have spiritualists, instead of Fabians we have psychical-reseachers. Instead, in a word, of the various "ists" and "isms" which were protest against limitation, precedent, orthodoxy, we have a countless number of sects and societies which no one pretends to understand, but which all point in a given direction. We have Christian Scientists, Mind-Curers, Metaphysical-Healers, Rosicrution Brotherhoods, revivals of Mystic Masonry, Spiritism, Hermetic Societies, Universal Brotherhoods, Ethical Culturists and the Lord only knows how many others beside.

The significant, the very significant feature that is common to all these movements is (a) they all have what might be called a mystical basis of some sort; (b) they are all of them *constructive;* they aim in each case to give to the world some new thoughts or in the case of theosophy, an entire new system of thought. Their attack, if they make any, on old systems, is but an incident of their propaganda.

There can be no reasonable doubt that these various movements have had a very much more far reaching effect upon the thought of the world than is generally supposed. A glance at our book lists of the last few years will itself prove this, for the number of novels that deal with occult themes is simply astonishing, and the demand for them seems to be growing. It is true that they are mostly ephemeral and trashy, but there are notable exceptions to this, and they are none the less signs of the times because of their inferiority.

From a careful survey of the past twenty-five years it would appear that theosophy may more or less claim to be the father of this mystical movement; for although the spiritualistic movement antedates it, the latter is so hopelessly entangled with a mass of vulgar fraud and more or less revolting "phenomena" that it is doubtful if it would have much affected the thought of the time.

may be claiming too much for theosophy to say that it produced

the results we are noting. It is more probable that its advent was synchronous with a general tendency of the human mind which had its source in an infinite variety of causes, but the facts appear to be that we can trace the source of nine-tenths of these mystical movements back to one or another of the various theories first put forward in this day and generation by Madame Blavatsky.

Apart from the evidence of the current mystical novel we can find many other indications of the prevalance and influence of the mystical idea. Twenty years ago hardly anyone was familiar with the researches of Prof. Gregory in Scotland, and Dr. Braid in England, into what is known as hypnotism. Few believed in it. Now who does not? Indeed, who can help it? When Madame Blavatsky spoke of the astral plane, she was laughed at, but no one laughs at Kipling's *Brushwood Boy* or Du Maurier's *Peter Ibbetson*, and yet both are stories of persons who meet and live and love on the astral plane. We ridiculed the idea that Blavatsky and Judge could communicate with adepts by telepathy, but the Psychical Research Society has proved countless instances of this; and did not we all receive something of a shock when Mark Twain seriously recounted several instances of thought transference in his own experience.*

Prof. Hodgson went to India twenty years ago to investigate Madame Blavatsky and her phenomena, and he reported on his return, on what is now conceded to have been very insufficient evidence, that she was a fraud. Last summer in the *New York Herald*, was an account of recent experiments with psychics and psychic forces, in which Prof. Hodgson now says he is compelled to believe, and which are quite as wonderful as any of the famous Blavatsky phenomena. Moreover, we have Prof. James publicly announcing that he has witnessed manifestations of some forces, under conditions which make it impossible to come to any other conclusion than that a force was at work not explainable by any of the accepted theories of science;—a statement so conservative that few people grasp its full significance. Prof. Oliver Lodge also states his full belief in the genuineness of the phenomena performed by the Italian medium Eulalia Usebio. That she has been discovered perpetrating frauds since then, is but the common fate of all mediums and in no wise detracts from the value of his testimony. Does not that typical, though perhaps eccentric, W. T. Stead, speak in the most common-place manner of his "control,"

*Atlantic Monthly.

and his automatic writing, and have we not magazines by the hundreds that treat of every phase of this subject, from how to buy stocks by casting your horoscope to travelling in your astral body! But why multiply instances? Max Nordau says that all of this is a sign of degeneracy, and though he has been proved to be one of his own worst types, and we instinctively feel that this judgment is not to be trusted, yet it is important that we endeavor to understand the significance of this mystical tendency which is so salient a feature of the thought of the day.

An analysis of the more important of these various occult movements and their underlying motives is exceedingly interesting and produces some very unexpected results. We find:

1st. They all deal with some phase of the "half-known" or "unknown" worlds.

2nd. Their underlying motive in every case would appear to be altruistic or philanthropic. This seems to be so even in such movements as Christian Science and Mind-Cure, where the resultant is often more harmful than good.

3rd. Contrary to the general supposition there appears to be no evidence of self-interest in the organizers of these movements. Their founders all believed they had missions and usually devoted their lives to their organizations. Blavatsky died a pauper and is proved to have supported herself by her writings for the secular Russian magazines.

In other words, foolish as many of these mystical movements seem to the uninitiated, they deserve respect and a hearing because of the honesty of their purpose, as well as because they are constantly growing factors in the evolution of the race.

Philologists tell us that one of the indications of the real importance of any new movement is the number of words it introduces into the vocabulary of the language. If this be true, the long list of new words or old words with a new and specialized meaning, points to the very considerable influence of the mystical tendency. Psychic, noetic, astral, astral light, astral body, karma, reincarnation, nirvana, hypnotism, mesmerism, magnetism, nerve fluid, automatic writing, control, elementals, spirits, adepts, mahatmas, the distinction now drawn between soul and spirit, cycles, currents, forces, suggestion, auto-suggestion, thought-transference, telepathy, psychometry, clairvoyance, clairaudience, seer, medium; are some that come readily to mind.

Another indication is the great increase of interest in and sale of the eastern mystical books. Many years ago Emerson and one

or two other seers told of the value of the *Upanishads*, but it is only in the last ten or fifteen years that they have been in any sense generally read. The new editions of Max Müller's *Sacred Books of the East* is but a straw showing the direction of the wind.

Consider also the new science of psychology. There is not in history any record of so complete a change, and so rapid a development of an entire department of human knowledge. Twenty years ago there was no science of psychology, there was but a hopeless jumble of errors and theories which were worse than misleading; and while it is still in its infancy, still only grouping in the borderland of facts, without firmly established fundamental principles, yet it is accumulating a carefully selected mass of data, with great intelligence and with infinite pains.

But chief among all the signs of the times is the attitude and development of the Churches. Broadminded clergymen all over the land are telling each other and their congregations that dogmatic, sectarian theology as taught in the past, is doomed; that men have outgrown this, and that the only salvation of the Church is to expand and liberalize itself until it fills the needs of the age. In fact until it is in advance of the age and takes its place once more as a leader and guide.

About ten years ago I heard the most prominent Episcopal clergyman in one of our largest cities, condemn in wholesale terms the mystical movement as represented by Emereon, Whistler and Wagner! Last summer I saw by the papers that he had attended a Wagnerian Cycle at Beyreuth. Now he probably has Whistler's *Symphony in Green*, over his study table, and keeps Emerson's *Essays* at his bedside; at least I hope so. When he has read the *Upanishads* and has been through a course of theosophy, his sermons may be worth listening to and his influence good.

What the Churches need, and by Churches I mean more particularly all sects of Protestanism, is a levening of this mystical tendency, a more vital realization that the life of the Soul and its welfare is after all more real and important than material well being, and that religion should be a constant training of the Soul and not a form followed one day in seven. This is fully appreciated by the brightest minds of the Churches and many are the efforts to bring it about. Nothing will do more to accomplish it than the mystical element of modern thought, for it fills a need that unquestionably exists, and a demand will just as surely produce a supply in the realm of thought as in the field covered by political economy. It may take longer, but come it will. If the Churches

are to supply this new demand, it will be by absorbing this element and offering to the growing minds of the race a more consistent philosphy, a more rational religion, than they ever have before. Can they do it?

JOHN BAIRD.

ORIENTAL DEPARTMENT.

Edited by Charles Johnston.

THE OPENING EYELIDS OF THE MORN.

"There is a small white lotus bud in this house of the Soul; in it there is a firmanent, and what is therein is to be searched for and sought.

"And if they should ask: As to this white lotus bud in the house of the Soul, and the firmanent that is within it, what is hidden there, that should be searched for and sought? Let him answer thus:

"As great as are the heavens above, so great is the heaven within the heart; in it both Heaven and Earth are set, both the Fire and the Breath, the Sun and the Moon, the Lightning and the Stars. All that is in the world, and all that is not,—all is set therein.

"And if they should ask: If in this house of the Soul all is set, all beings and all desires, when old age comes upon it, and it fails, what is left behind? Let him answer:

"This grows not old when the house grows old, this dies not when its dwelling dies. The house of the Eternal, wherein all desires dwell, endures; it is the Soul, free from evil; for it is neither old age, nor death, nor sorrow, hunger nor thirst; its desires are true, its will is true. Therefore whatever beings seek for here, whatever estate they desire, whatever people or land, into that they are born.

"But these true desires are covered up with false; of these desires, being true, there is a covering of falsehood. So whoever belonging to him, dying, goes forth from the world, him he cannot find, to behold him. So whoever there is belonging to him, living or dead, and whatever else he wishes for but cannot obtain, when he goes thither, he finds it all; for here his true desires are covered up with false.

"And like as when a treasure of gold is hidden in a field, those who are familiar with the field, walking over and over it, know it

not, so, verily, all these beings go day by day to the world of the Eternal, and know it not, for they are covered up with falsehood.

"This is the Soul, in the heart within; and he who knows this, goes day by day to the celestial world. This is the place of peace, and he who rises above the body, enters the Higher Light, putting off his mortal form. This is the Soul, the Immortal, the Fearless, this is the Eternal, and the name of the Eternal is Everlasting Life."—*Chandogya Upanishad.*

The truth above all truths is this: the mighty Power, the abounding and exalting Life, which men of old have called the Soul, is very near to us at all times; and only our many-colored fancies hinder us from knowing the Soul, entering the Life, becoming the Power. If we feel ourselves bereft, deserted, and forlorn, that too is fancy; it rests with us, when we will, to inherit the realm and the radiance.

The prophets have been rather lugubrious and sad-eyed. They seem to have put themselves on record while the sacrifice of the old Adam was still a recent and painful memory, even a sentimental and comforting regret. One would willingly put the affairs of the Eternal in a more cheering light.

This very sentimentality is itself a fancy, the last self-indulgence of the heart; as the palate, jaded with sweet things, finds a sensual relish in bitter; and as people please themselves, after too much love, by a little hate. So the ascetics dearly relished their mood of sadness, and found much pleasure in their tears.

And it is nothing but a web of fancies that prevents us from here and now inheriting our immortality. The sad prophets have spoken of renouncing the body and all its works. In truth the body has very little to do with it. But fancies about the body have a great deal. It is the fancy that the body is such a warm and comfortable dwelling-place, that keeps us all from becoming aerial travellers. We are so pre-occupied with our bodily lives, and our imaginations are so full of our bodily concerns, and all the sorrows and joys we have come to think of as the body's heritage, that we have literally not a free moment for the Higher Light.

It is really the most natural thing in the world for us to be serene, well-balanced, full of power; with an overflow of energy and vigor that makes all things we do creative, and with a real feeling of the throbbing and pulsating life all round us, a sympathy which makes our lives tenfold more interesting and full of force. It is really the most natural thing for us to feel our immortality, not

only once and again, in beatific vision, but at all times, all through our lives. It is really proper for us to feel the strength within, far outweighing all the confusion of events without; to feel events rising up within, and coming forth through us to the outer world, instead of invading and intimidating us from outside.

That is what we should be: what we are, is the result of fancy. Death and separation and sorrow are mere fancies, and if we were not so wholly engrossed with our dreams, we should know it, and rate them at their very moderate real values. No one has ever yet put on record what an incredible amount of illusion comes into all our lives. We keep crying and lamenting, because we are afraid of the Quiet. We keep ourselves in the dark, because we are afraid that the Light would shine through our sad, beloved dreams, and show them to be the flimsy things they really are. But some one should state, in good round terms, the positive and affirmative side. We need not really shiver, while there is so much sunlight going to waste. We need not fear change, when every new step will be the finding of a hidden treasure; and one of the characteristic things about these new treasures is, that each one, as we find it, seems so very familiar; each new footing gained seems so very natural and homelike, that we come to wonder how our former resting-place seemed a permanent home.

The Law and the Life have ordained matters thus: every day we do a certain amount of real work, springing directly from the will: work which rises up within us and demands to be done. But this work we wrap round with clouds and mists of fancy, of fears and hopes, of all kinds of vain imaginings, which have simply nothing to do with things as they really are. And at last the rush and torrent of our fancies wear us out, and bring us to the time of wrinkles and grey hairs. But work did not wear us out, nor the exercise of creative will. The more the will does, the stronger it grows, the better able to create. What wears us out, is the inincredible amount of foolishness we manage to mix in with our work, the noise and stir of which must create much unfavorable comment among the dignified mountain pines.

As our lives wear us out, so does each day of life. And then we enter the world of dreams, and fancy carries us away altogether, and has things all her own way. And curiously enough, though the dreams are very unpleasant while we are awake, they begin to be pleasant as soon as we go to sleep; and the reason of this is, that, in going to sleep, we really triumph over one fancy: the fancy that we, personally, are responsible for the working of

the material world. It is this responsibilty which gives the modern man his brow of care ; and the archangels, whose real charge it is, must find his interference rather trying. We are not really so very responsible ; not the personal part of us, at least. So we are much easier in our minds, when we elect to let the good world go on without us, and sink for a while to sleep. We feel that there is still some risk of the universe going awry, and that half-conscious feeling will in due time wake us again.

But while we sleep, we feel easier. We take our fancies as they come, the gay with the grave, and we are not responsible. Then, after a while, we rise above the colored clouds, and enter the sunlight of the Life, where our peace is, and our power : our proper dwelling-place and home. It is strange to think that the eternal secret is not further off than that. A little dreaming, a little sleep, and we are in the midst of it ; and it would be well for us, if the dreaming did not begin again. We should find we had gained very much, and lost very little ; we should find we had gained the Radiance and the Realm, the Life and the Power ; and that we were amongst a serene and very august company, whom we should recognize with a certain awestruck surprise.

And this happens to us day by day, for that life in the Radiance is our real day ; and not the sad outward hours of our tribulation. Yet we are foolish enough to leave it all, to come back again and dream and lament, and think it all so real and so sad. We have become once more, in our fancy, responsible for the right working of the whole visible world.

Then we are all very much afraid of each other, and fear has torment. And from fear come envy, hatred, all uncharitableness. When we grow a little, we shall find that no one can trespass in our kingdom; that each of us is sovereign lord; and then we shall grow very benevolent.

There is great solace for us, within the curtains of the night. But we are not meant to withdraw and hide ourselves in the darkness. We are to come forth and work ; our wills are to subdue the whole visible world, and the instinct to work and to conquer is strong and sound within us.

Conquerors we shall be, and victors, and immortal, when we shake off the web of fancies. The white lotus of the soul, still in the bud with us, will then open in full bloom, and we shall come forth exultant, under the opening eyelids of that morning, the morning of the everlasting day.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Question 126.

"Does duty consist in obeying one's nature, or in conquering it?"

Katharine Hillard.—There would be no need of this question if one realized fully how complex man's nature is. If man consisted only of his higher principles, if he were free from the desires that come from that lower nature which he possesses in common with the animals, and of which we therefore speak as the "animal soul," it would be easy to say he must *obey* his nature. Because once freed from the trammels of desire, his intuition would have nothing to interfere with it, and he could follow fearlessly the promptings from within. But as he is at present constituted, his inner sight is veiled, his apprehension of truth imperfect, and his instincts pull one way, while his deeper convictions tell him that he should follow another. So that the true answer to the question would be, I think, that we should *conquer* that part of our nature which is opposed to the best in us, that tends to degrade and not to elevate, while we should *obey* the inner Voice that we call "Conscience," a voice that grows ever clearer as we listen to it. But we cannot expect that this voice should say the same thing to each one of us because our environments and our capacities are not the same, to say nothing of the rest of our Karma, the result of the thought and action of many past lives. Therefore we cannot judge the duty of another. "The wise man seeketh for that which is homogeneous with his own nature," says the Gita, and "having subdued all his passions," (that is, *conquered* the lower part of his nature), "he performeth with his active faculties all the duties of life, unconcerned as to their result."

Malbrouk.—Friend, what is your "nature"? Is it of the sort that should be conquered or that should be obeyed? Are you a devil or are you a god? Possibly you are, like most people, an uncanny compound of the two. In that case, discriminate : conquer the devil and obey the god.

H. B. Mitchell.—When I repeated this question to a friend, I was told the answer depended upon whether nature should be spelt with a capital N or no. I, for my part much prefer to spell it with a capital, and think men would be the better for adopting my view and giving over considering themselves such "poor miserable sinners;" which they may be, but it is none the less unhealthy for them to go about saying so.

In an essay of Emerson's on *Self-Reliance* there occurs a passage which has voiced my own opinions on this question. "On my saying," it reads, "'What have I to do with the sacredness of traditions if I live wholly from within?' my friend suggested: 'But these impulses may be from below, not from above.' I replied: They do not seem to me to be such; but if I am the Devil's child, I will live then from the Devil.' No law can be sacred to me but that of my nature. Good and bad are but names readily transferable to that or this; the only right is what is after my constitution, the only wrong what is against it."

One can not help thinking that it must have been a printer's error that nature is here without a capital. For in this a man's nature is portrayed as the man himself, and to conquer it moral suicide.

I sometimes wonder what the good people who are so assiduously engaged in conquering, and not only conquering but annihilating, their Natures, expect to have left when their task is accomplished. Poor colorless souls, is it so they shall have strength to lift the bars of the Gates of Gold? Do they forget that man is more than the gods because of the brute in him.

But O, the uncontrolled brute in him! Some of us, like Arjuna, need to be told to dress our bows for the fight.

There are four things said to be required of a Chela in the Eastern Schools. "To know, to will, to dare, and to keep silent." Some of us who may know a little, who have sought in the heart the "source of evil," and found it flowering there; having laid our hands upon it, need heart to will, and strength to dare. Need to be told that,

> "If the red slayer think he slays
> Or if the slain think he is slain
> They know not well the subtile ways
> I keep, and pass, and turn again."

For the "heart will bleed, and the whole life of the man seems to be utterly dissolved."

It is written that the great necessity of the disciple is to guide his life, not to be guided by it. To do this there must be strife, must be continual, grim, silent battle, but it is not his Nature that he fights, nor is it for the sake of fighting. Man is not a destructive agent, but a creative force. He must take his life and Nature into his own hands and upbuild them in accord with that which is Himself. For "man will never be that which he can and should be, until, by a conscious following of that inner natural necessity which

is the only true necessity, he makes his life a mirror of Nature, and frees himself from his thraldom to outer artificial counterfeits. Then will he first become a living man, who now is a mere wheel in the mechanism of this or that Religion, Nationality, or State". . . . *Richard Wagner.*

And again: "Whoso would be a man must be a noncomformist. He who would gather immortal palms must not be hindered by the name of goodness but must explore if it be goodness. Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind."—*Emerson.*

So duty does not consist in the conquering of nature, nor wholly in the obeying of Nature, but in something transcending both, the upbuilding of a man's life, and of all life, to something that is Himself and yet ever beyond him.

Cavé.—I should say that duty consisted in neither one course nor the other. The first alternative offered by the question is easily disposed of. If a man "conquers" his nature, what has he then left with which to accomplish? He would cease to possess either force or power, and the ability to rise would therefore no longer be his. On the other hand obedience to nature should be for the soul that has attained, the Master; or by the man only in so far as he *knows his nature,*—and how many know this? We are all more or less beclouded by the mists of personality; we have few of us discovered what we really are; and that I should say was the way duty lay for the great majority,—in the effort to discover themselves.

Generally speaking, we find two classes of forces in people today; the permanent and the impermanent. All that pertains to the lower side of life, that has the unqualified downward tendency, is invariably impermanent; and such cannot belong to our nature, which is soul, not matter. All that is high and good and of upward tendency, on the other hand, belongs to the permanent and therefore is of the soul. But here the man feeling his way, finds a new difficulty confronting him, in the fact that each soul has its individual expression, and this he may not disregard at his peril, for fear of missing the real purpose of his life. We have some general guides here. It is said that the disciple must "desire possessions above all," but it is added, "those possessions must belong to the pure soul only and be possessed therefore by all pure souls equally and thus be the especial property of the whole only when united," for the "united spirit of life," we are told, is our "only true self." Also, somewhat further on it is stated, that "the *whole nature of the man* must be used wisely by the one who desires to enter the way."

One might quote *Light on the Path* ad infinitum on this subject, for it outlines the whole process in phrases, simple as a child's, but with profound depths of meaning.

Therefore, I should say that the disciple must *study* his nature; must patiently and labourously, life after life, select and cull amongst the varying and ever-changing forces he finds at work in him, until as the result of almost endless experiment and test, he finds unmistakably those which really belong to his being; and having woven therefrom an expression of his true self which he may confidently call his "nature," he thereupon obeys it as the essential and fundamental law of his being.

THEOSOPHICAL NEWS AND WORK.

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

Members are reminded that their yearly dues for 1899 are now payable and should be forwarded to the Treasurer, A. H. Spencer, Box 1584, New York, as follows: Branch Secretaries should remit $1.00 for each member of their Branches. Members at large should remit $2.00 each direct to the Treasurer.

(Signed) J. D. Buck, President T. S. A.

THEOSOPHICAL ACTIVITIES.

Reports from the various Branches show that good work is being done on old and legitimate lines, viz., in study among the members, and promulgating the philosophy in the community. The field in these two important directions is ample, and neither the need nor the interest in the least abated or exhausted. But a small fraction of any community has yet really heard of theosophy beyond the name, and a few salient points. If dissensions, and follies, and sensationalism can be gotten rid of for a reasonable length of time, an ample and intelligent following can be assured. This was demonstrated at the last meeting of the Cincinnati Branch. The subject on the syllabus was "Brain Memory and Soul Memory," and a simple announcement of the subject in the daily papers was sufficient to pack the hall to overflowing with an audience of over 300, many standing for nearly two hours with interest unabated. Such events show what can easily be done by persistent and consistent work. Two new Branches have just been organized in New York City, where perhaps the disorganizing methods of the past year have been most disastrous. An old and faithful worker is out with a circular proposing to organize a "new T. S." One is tempted to reply, "What's the matter with the *old* T. S. A.?" and the answer is not far to seek. The old T. S. A. is good enough if all who formerly believed in it and worked for it will just drop all dissension and resume the old lines of work. The doors have been held wide open, and all harsh criticisms avoided; first, because they are unbrotherly and belie the first principle of Theosophy; and second, because they are always unwise. False methods, and the perversion of principles have been designated and repudiated, but with the largest charity for individuals.

There is no reason why any or all old members should not or could not return to their allegiance to the society founded by H. P. B., Olcott, Judge, and others, and which they themselves have done so much to sustain and support. While none are solicited or urged to return, they should know that whenever they desire "of their own free-will and accord" to return, their old places have been left vacant for them. All partisan spirit is untheosophical, for there should be the largest liberty, liberality, and toleration among professed Brothers. Nor is such a plain statement a bid for members. Those who have joined other organizations, and who find themselves in full sympathy and accord with the methods therein employed, with the principles advocated, or implied, and with the rules enforced, *should, by all means, remain where they are.* All affiliations, made or maintained, should receive the approval of one's own conscience and judgment, for only so can there be any zest or enthusiasm for work. Only willing and devoted workers count in any movement. Those who have left the old T. S. A. under misapprehension and find themselves unhappy and discontented and really wish themselves back in their "old familiar places," have no need to organize a "new T. S." They will find no essential change in the old T. S. A., and while they will not be solicited, they will be none the less cordially welcomed, and without admonition or constraint. All have learned valuable lessons in the recent history of the T. S. All efforts or methods calculated to destroy the T. S. or long divert it from its true mission and aim have hitherto failed, and *will continue to fail*, whether the real workers in the T. S. be few or many. There will always be a sufficient number to close up the ranks and work steadfastly on the *same old lines.* Scarcely a day passes without witnessing the return of old members, and the most hopeful sign, is the fact, that they bring no harsh or unkind criticism toward *any one.* These are among the most important activities going on, and they are healthy and inspiring, and altogether hopeful for the future outlook of the real work of the T. S. A. The true F. T. S. may be deluded or bewildered, but when he has once grasped the "Doctrine of the Heart," he cannot permanently go astray. J. D. BUCK.

REVIEWS.

What is Art?—A magnificent subject for discussion at a Branch meeting, and Mr. Charles Johnston, by translating Count Leon Tolstoi's book under that title, has provided all Theosophists with food for thought as well as for discussion. The subject is one of immense importance: what is Art to-day? what should Art become? The Art of the future, Count Tolstoi answers in part, will flow from the intuition of universal brotherhood. Art is the herald of the soul. But not all of the Count's conclusions will be accepted by students of Theosophy, and in his Preface the translator most interestingly points out some of the weaknesses of the work as well as its fundamental strength. It is a book worth reading and keeping.—May be obtained from the W. Q. Judge Publishing Co., price $1.00.

The English Theosophist, for January, makes a new departure. The Editor's notes are omitted, which is a pity for they were always more than worth reading, and a department of "Questions and Answers" is begun. Dr. Hartmann writes briefly of the several societies which are now in existence, saying very truly that each is a genuine Society only in so far as it is theosophical in spirit and practice. A gold coin is valuable not because of its name or the design on its face but because of the gold it contains. There is the usual reprint from the *Path*, and a longer list of activities than usual.

BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS.

The Secret Doctrine, (Vols. I, II and Index), *H. P. Blavatsky*,	$12.50
Key to Theosophy, *H. P. Blavatsky*	1.50
Studies in Occultism, *H. P. Blavatsky*, (6 Vols. at 35 cents)	1.50
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Letters That Have Helped Me, *W. Q. Judge*, (compiled by Jasper Niemand)	.50
Mystic Masonry, *J. D. Buck*	1.50
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The Idyll of the White Lotus, *M. C.*, paper 50 cents ; cloth	1.25
Light on the Path, (with notes), *M. C.*	.40
Esoteric Buddhism, *A. P. Sinnett*, paper 50 cents ; cloth	1.25
The Occult World, *A. P. Sinnett*, paper 50 cents ; cloth	1.25
The Growth of the Soul, *A. P. Sinnett*	1.50
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